

**REMARKS**

In the final Office Action, the Examiner again rejected claims 15-17, 19, 22 and 44 pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Gruner (U.S. Patent No. 5,634,466). Claims 15-17, 19-20 and 22 were again rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Dunham et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,762,067). Claims 15-17, 19, 22 and 48 were again rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hossack et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,971,925) in view of Gruner or Dunham et al. Claims 1-9 and 24-36 were allowed. Claim 23 was objected to as being allowable if rewritten in independent form.

The Examiner did not indicate any basis for rejection of claim 21, but did not otherwise indicate the claim as allowable if rewritten. The Examiner also did not indicate any rejection for previously added claims 49 and 50. For the reasons discussed below, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejections of claims 15-17, 19, 20, 22, 44 and 48, including independent claims 15 and 48.

In a telephone interview on April 22, 2004 between the Examiner and Craig Summerfield (Reg. No. 37,947), claim 21 was discussed. After the Examiner pointed out that claim 21 was not specifically rejected, Applicants noted that the "dielectric film wraps around a circumference of the ultrasound transducer" distinguished over the cited references. The Examiner proposed changing the language to "surrounds a circumference." Applicant believes this is not a narrowing amendment. The Examiner indicated that this limitation distinguishes over the cited references and that the claim may be allowable. Independent claim 15 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 21, including the film surrounding a circumference limitation, so claim 15 is allowable. Similarly, claim 48 has been amended to include the film surrounds a circumference limitation, so claim 48 is allowable.

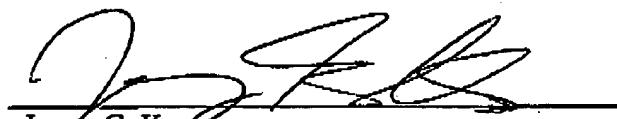
The Examiner graciously indicated that these amendments may be considered despite the after final response. In particular, the Examiner agreed to consider allowing the amendments after final since: (1) claim 21 was not specifically rejected in the final Office Action or even the preceding Office Action despite the lack of rejection being pointed out in the preceding response and (2) the amendment to the language of claim 21 is for clarification and the limitation in general has already been searched with respect to both claim 21 as well as claim 44.

The dependent claims are allowable for the same reason as the claims from which they depend. Claim 44 has been amended to confirm with the amendment to claim 15. Claims 49 and 50 have been amended, but depend from claims 15 and 48.

**CONCLUSION:**

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and seeks early allowance thereof. If for any reason, the Examiner is unable to allow the application but believes that an interview would be helpful to resolve any issues, he is respectfully requested to call the undersigned at (650) 694-5810 or Craig Summerfield at (312) 321-4726.

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Jenny G. Ko  
Registration No. 44,190  
Attorney for Applicant

Siemens Corporation  
Intellectual Property Department  
186 Wood Avenue South  
Iselin, N.J. 08830  
(650) 694-5810